

# THE GULL



Golden Gate Audubon Society      Berkeley, California  
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## GGAS PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This is a tough time, not only for our birds and wildlife and environment in general; it is also a tough time for the Golden Gate Audubon Chapter and National Audubon, itself.

National Audubon (NAS) finds itself \$2.5 million in the red. Faced with no solution to this deficit and faced with falling revenues in the future, the Board of National Audubon felt that some action must be taken.

Their first action took place last year when they decided to change the formula by which Chapters receive a share of the dues you pay to NAS. This is the money chapters live on. As a result of this reallocation, OUR FINANCE COMMITTEE PREDICTS THAT WE WILL LOSE ABOUT \$10,000 THIS YEAR IN INCOME (approximately 20% of our budget). This has led us to reduce our paid staff's hours and the number of pages per Gull issue, as necessary. Elsewhere in this issue there is a plea for members to find us a new home. This is a direct result of this new policy.

What else can you do to help? We will receive a larger dues payment for every new member our chapter recruits. If you present any gift subscriptions this year please order them through the chapter. We have our own order forms and will be glad to send them to you, if you call us at 843-2222. Donations, of course, are always welcome, and needed.

Worse may be in store for us. NAS is presently considering an even harsher dues-splitting policy. The result of this change, in which we would get dues only for those members who enroll through our office, not through the mail, would be catastrophic. No office, no staff, possibly no newsletter (or at most simply a listing of fieldtrips), little or no effective conservation activities.

What can you do? You can write National Audubon a short note asking them not to change the dues-splitting policy so drastically. Tell them that chapters should continue to receive a dues-split from all its members not just chapter-originated members. You can write to either Bruce Howard or Donal O'Brien at National Audubon Society, 950 Third Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. 10022.

Aside from our own personal doom and gloom situation our chapter also faces the terrible situation of not having a field trips chairman. Shirley Kelly has done a wonderful job for more years than we had a right to hope for. But the time has come for someone new to take over the job. It is not onerous. It takes only a few hours a month of your time. Please, let's have some volunteers. Call the office at 843-222, PLEASE!

—ARTHUR FEINSTEIN

## FIELD TRIP CALENDAR

**Wednesday, September 9—Mini-trip to Alameda South Shore and surrounding areas.** Meet at 9 a.m. in Alameda at Broadway and Shoreline Dr. Bring lunch and scopes. Leaders: Ann Wilcox (351-9301) and friends.

**Saturday, September 12—San Mateo Coast.** See July/August *Gull* for details.

**Sunday, September 13—Tubbs Island.** Meet at 9 a.m. at the gate to Tubbs Island. From Hwy. 101 take the Hwy. 37 (Vallejo) exit. Proceed beyond the turnoff to Hwy. 121 and cross the railroad tracks. The gate is on the right just beyond the tracks. The gate is locked so be on time to enter with the group. We will then caravan over dirt roads to the starting point. We will walk about three miles on level terrain looking for shorebirds. Bring lunch. Leader: Gloria Markowitz (892-2910).

**Sunday, September 20—Point Diablo.** Meet at the top of Bunker Hill where we will watch for migrating hawks and land birds between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. From San Francisco drive north across the Golden Gate Bridge and take Alexander Ave. Exit. Turn left as if to return to San Francisco, drive under the freeway and bear to the right. Go up the road to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, continue along the road past the intersection with a road coming up from Rodeo Valley to the large tunnels on the right. Park and walk up the trail to the left of the second tunnel. We will bird from the observation point at the north end of the

hilltop. Bring lunch and liquids. Sun screen, a hat and a wind-breaker may be advisable. Co-Leaders: Carter Faust (453-2899) and Herb Brandt (239-2711). (✓)

**Saturday, September 26—Coastal San Francisco.** Meet at 8 a.m. at the parking lot between South and Middle Lakes (Chain of Lakes) near the 41st Ave. and Lincoln Way entrance to Golden Gate Park. We will bird in the park, Lake Merced and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in search of migrants. Bring your lunch and be prepared for cold weather near the coast. Leader: Dan Murphy (564-0074). (✓)

**Sunday, September 27—Lands End, San Francisco.** Meet at 8 a.m. at the Palace of the Legion of Honor parking lot (Lincoln Park). From Geary Blvd. go north (toward the Bay) on 34th Ave. to the top of the hill (through the golf course) and park in the large circular lot to the east (right). We will walk about two miles. Leader: Alan Hopkins (664-0983) (✓)

**Sunday, October 4—Sunol Regional Park.** Meet at 8 a.m. at the Park Headquarters. Take I-680 south, exit at Calavaras Rd., go left and follow the signs to Sunol park (about 5 miles). Bring lunch. We should see some wintering residents and fall migrants common to the interior. Trip ends after lunch. Leader: Art Edwards (447-3720). (✓) \$

**Sunday, October 11—Beginners' Trip to Coyote Hills Regional Park.** Meet at 9 a.m. at the visitors' center. Take the Nimitz Frwy. (I-880) south

to the Decoto Rd./Rt. 84 exit. Go west on 84 to Thornton Ave./Paseo Padre exit, then go north on Paseo Padre one mile to Patterson Ranch Rd., then left on Patterson Ranch Rd. to the park entrance. Bring lunch and liquids. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them. This is a unique park with freshwater marsh habitat. Leader: Gene Hull (525-6893). (✓)

Carpooling arrangements can be made for trips marked (✓). Call Kate Partridge at 236-7022 and leave a message. She will contact you.

Trips marked with \$ go to parks or other sites which require an entrance fee.

Problems: If for any reason you have difficulty getting in touch with a field trip leader or need information regarding a trip, call Shirley Kelly (387-8290) or the GGAS office (843-2222).

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

## JUNE-EARLY JULY

### OBSERVATIONS

May 28–July 7

#### News from the Farallones

The success of the breeding season on the Farallones each year to a great extent depends on water temperature and its influence on food productivity. In May the Farallones were described as "bathing in an oasis of tropical water, surrounded by colder, more productive seas . . ." (PRBO). This was cause for concern because of the distances the birds would need to travel for their food sources. However, cold patches just west of the island indicated vigorous, localized upwelling, and the birds started breeding early and in high numbers. As of June 26 Common Murres, Western Gulls, Brandt's Cormorants, and Cassin's Auklets were doing very well, and surprising numbers of nonbreeding

Rhinoceros Auklets, two to three times more than last year, were invading SE Farallon in flocks of 40 to 50 birds. We await next month final news of the nesting season, including Pelagic Cormorant and Pigeon Guillemont successes. (Our thanks to Point Reyes Bird Observatory for all SE Farallon information, which covers April 24 through June 25.)

### Waterbirds

A late Northern Fulmar was with abundant Sooty Shearwaters May 30 (DLSu). Large numbers of Sootys were reported from Marin in Monterey Counties (mob). In Santa Cruz Co. peak numbers were found May 28–30, with 700,000 from Capitola to Pajaro Dunes on May 29; flocks of up to 200,000 were a daily occurrence off Santa Cruz and Capitola at least through June 19 (DLSu, CK). A Buller's Shearwater **May 31** in the Gulf of the Farallones (TJ) was two weeks earlier than last year's unusual sighting. A probable **Brown Booby** was seen with thousands of Sooty Shearwaters flying past the boat of observers experienced with this species ten miles off Moss Landing June 22 (GdeL).

An immature plumaged ("calico") Little Blue Heron was found at Charleston Slough July 7 (SEF). A Green-backed Heron reached SE Farallon June 14 to provide the Island with its eighth record. Two Ross' Geese were spending the summer far from their nesting grounds: one at Pajaro Dunes May 29–June 16 (DGe, DLSu, CK), (which is probably the same bird which wintered there); and one at Lake Solano County park June 6 (MBG). The Rodeo Lagoon Harlequin Duck was present at least to June 9 (GH).

Shorebirds began arriving from northern breeding grounds during the

period to the delight of wader watchers. A Lesser Yellowlegs was at Mt. View Forebay July 6 (SEF). Two Wandering Tattlers were seen on a whale-watching trip to SE Farallon Island May 31 (TJ), and a single individual in basic plumage was flying from one breakwater to another near Alameda Naval Air Station June 11 (HG). An adult Baird's Sandpiper in incomplete molt to alternate plumage was at Laguna Creek Beach and Marsh June 9–14 (BaS, DGe, DLSu).

Three Parasitic Jaegers were seen near the Farallones June 28 (TJ, DLSh). A South Polar Skua viewed by many on a Farallon Islands boat trip June 21 (PJW, PW) adds another to our late June-early July sightings of this species. A Sabine's Gull flying north past Davenport Landing May 29 (DLSu) was probably a late migrant, while the status of three near the Farallones June 28 is unclear (TJ, DLSh)—nonbreeders/early migrants? A Black Tern in winter plumage was at Charleston Slough June 17–July 6 (SEF, PEL). A Xantus' Murrelet, seen on a Monterey pelagic trip June 20 (DLSh), was a bit early.

## Landbirds

The landbird vagrant season on SE Farallon also was considered above average, while mainland vagrant-hunting was unexceptional. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was found at Stinson Beach State Park July 3 (JAn). Three Chimney Swifts visited SE Farallon June 3–5. The usual average there is about one each year. Two Cassin's Kingbirds were found on the Livermore Mines Road May 28–June 7: most observers saw one bird in the area (DSi, AW), but two were found May 30 (JE). On June 4 one was chasing a Turkey Vulture, and nesting was queried (PEG). An Eastern Kingbird graced Marin Headlands June 13–14 (KFC, DW). SE

Farallon has two Brown Thrashers, one May 24–25 and another June 10–13, their first since 1980. Two days later, June 15, a Brown Thrasher was at the Pt. Reyes Lighthouse (DW)—same bird? Two singing male **Yellow-throated Vireos** were found on one weekend in Marin County: May 30 just north of Inverness (BWY, AST, MDa), and May 31 near Nicasio Town Square (JGE). Three Red-eyed Vireos reached SE Farallon June 4–14.

The following table of vagrant warblers (including April 24–June 25 data for SE Farallon) lists 41 individuals of 16 species. Only 13 individuals of 7 species were found away from SE Farallon. For the spring vagrant season totals are 53–54 individuals of 17 species.

Tennessee Warbler (total 1; 3 this spring)		
1 SE Farallon	June 3–5	PRBO
Northern Parula (total 6; 10–11 this spring)		
2 SE Farallon	June 7	PRBO
1 5 Brooks	May 31	KA, GMa
1 Inverness	June 6	DQ
1 Bear Valley Hdqtrs	June 20	DW
(continuing bird, not counted this month)		
1 Bobolaine Audubon	June 20	BED
Sanctuary, Sutter Co.		
1 Gazos Cr. Road	June 21	AME
San Mateo Co.		
Chestnut-sided Warbler (total 1)		
1 SE Farallon	June 2	PRBO
Magnolia Warbler (total 4; 5 this spring)		
3 SE Farallon	June 7–16	PRBO
1 Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	June 2	DDeS
Cape May Warbler (total 1)		
1 SE Farallon	May 29	PRBO
Black-throated Blue Warbler (total 1)		
1 Pt. Reyes Nunes to Fish Docks	May 30 May 31	BHi, RTh, JH, mob
Palm Warbler (total 2)		
2 SE Farallon	May 19–20; June	PRBO

Blackpoll Warbler (total 2)		
2 SE Farallon	May 19-27; PRBO	
	June 13-16	
Black-and-white Warbler (total 3)		
3 SE Farallon	May 21; PRBO	
	June 4;	
	June 8	
American Redstart (total 8)		
5 SE Farallon	June 2-18 PRBO	
1 Pt. Reyes Fish Docks	June 1 DW	
1 Pt. Reyes New Willows	June 14 JM	
1 College of Alameda	June 15 JSL	
Worm-eating Warbler (total 1)		
1 SE Farallon	June 13 PRBO	
Ovenbird (total 4; 5 this spring)		
3 SE Farallon	June 2-16 PRBO	
1 Castle Rock St. Park Santa Cruz Co.	June 16 DLSu	
Northern Waterthrush (total 2; 3 this spring)		
1 SE Farallon	June 9-10 PRBO	
1 Rodeo Gulch	May 29 DLSu	
Kentucky Warbler (total 1; 2 this spring)		
1 SE Farallon	May 9 PRBO	
(earliest Island record)		
Mourning Warbler (total 2)		
2 SE Farallon	June 7; 15 PRBO	
Canada Warbler (total 2)		
1 SE Farallon	June 8-9 PRBO	
1 Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	June 2 KA	
Thirteen Rose-breasted Grosbeaks from Marin to San Mateo Cos. were as follows:		
5 SE Farallon	May 31- PRBO	
	June 13	
1 Pt. Reyes Fish Docks	June 1 DW	
1 Lighthouse	June 7 MLR,ASH	
1 New Willows	June 16 BHo	
1 Tennessee Valley Rd.	June 10-11 HP,DW	
1 Orinda residence	June 27-28 PF	
1 Mt. Diablo	June 10 BWi	
1 Menlo Park	June 6 DLSu	
1 Gazos Creek Rd.	June 13-21 SEF,PJM, RFr, AME	

Four Blue Grosbeaks were found coastally: three at SE Farallon from May 21-June 13 (PRBO, *fide* SFB), and one at Pt. Reyes between the Lighthouse and Roadforks Pool June 14-15 (JM, DW). Only three Indigo Buntings were found during this report period (four for spring): two at SE Farallon May 9 and

May 18, and one at the end of Loma Prieta Ave. near the Santa Cruz/Santa Clara Co. line June 22, associating with several Lazuli Buntings (DLSu, BMo).

For the third consecutive spring Dickcissels visited SE Farallon: one May 22-30, and another June 28-30. An American Tree Sparrow arrived at SE Farallon June 1, and four Clay-colored Sparrows there May 6-22 were good numbers for spring. A Brewer's Sparrow reached SE Farallon May 30-June 1 (*fide* SFB), and another was at Palomarin May 31 (*fide* DDeS). A "Slate-colored" Junco at the Mendoza annex, Pt. Reyes May 30 (JM, et al.) was a surprising spring sighting. A singing male Bobolink was at Palomarin June 2 (DDeS). Another at Hawkin's Slough June 15 provided Santa Cruz Co. with its second spring record (DLSu). Three Yellow-headed Blackbirds at SE Farallon were good spring numbers there.

**Observers:** Kenneth Ackerman, Janice Andersen, Stephen F. Bailey, Kurt F. Campbell, Maryann Danielson, J. Mike Danzenbaker, Grace deLaet, David DeSante, Bruce E. Deuel, Alan Drennan, Joe Eaton, Al M. Eisner, Jules G. Evans, Shawneen E. Finnegan, Peggy First, Roland Franz, Doug George, Philip E. Gordon, Helen Green, Marguerite B. Gross, Bob Hirt (BHi), Bob Hogan (BHo), Alan S. Hopkins, Joel Hornstein, George Hugenberg, Tom Johnson, Clay Kempf, Ted H. Koundakjian, Paul E. Lehman, John S. Luther, Gloria Markowitz, Peter J. Metropulos, Brian Mori, Joseph Morlan, Point Reyes Bird Observatory (Farallon report thanks to Peter Pyle), Helen Pratt, Dave Quady, Cliff G. Richer, Mary Louise Rosegay, Barbara Scharfenstein, Debra L. Shearwater (DLSh), Shearwater Journeys, Dianne Sierra, Rich Stallcup, Audrey Stoye, David L. Suddjian (DLSu), Ron Thorn, Peter J. Watkins, Peter White, Anna Wilcox, David Wimpfheimer, Betty Wyatt (BWy).

Please report observations to Northern California Rare Bird Alert: 528-0288 or 524-5592.

—HELEN A. GREEN  
Observations Editor  
2001 Yolo Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707

## CONSERVATION NOTES

### CALPAW STILL NEEDS HELP

Finding your parks a little crowded lately? Afraid for the future of our wildlife due to dwindling habitat? CALPAW is a state initiative that will give \$700 million for the specific purpose of acquiring land for parks and wildlife habitat. This may be our best and last chance to make so major a step in protecting our natural resources. To do this we need to get 600,000 signatures, statewide, by November. Our chapter is actively supporting this effort and we thank all who have already volunteered their time to help this effort. THANKS!

However, we need still more help. If you are willing to spend just three hours out of your life helping this wonderful effort please call Bruce Walker at CALPAW headquarters at 540-6671, or our office at 843-2222.

### HELP FIGHT THE WATER WAR

You are all aware of the recent water diversion bills by Assemblyman Costa and Senator Ayala. The threat to take our Bay water south is all too real. We have won some battles lately but the war is still on. Please write your state legislators and, above all, Willie Brown, Jr., Assembly Speaker, and ask them to fight these bills with all their might. The address is:

State Capitol, Sacramento, 95814  
Do write, Please.

### MISSION BAY WETLAND

Many of us have written letters urging the City of San Francisco to create a wetland park in the proposed Mission Bay, 345 acre, development project. These letters have helped convince some in the City administration that such a park would provide considerable benefits to the City. However, the question of whether the wetland will go on Port of S.F. property, or on the developer's land, is becoming a real problem. Some do not believe that the City should give up future possible maritime land to a wetland. The developer does not want to give up any of his land for a wetland. We must convince the City that wherever it goes, this wetland will add greatly to the City's quality of life, and also provide a considerable attraction for visitors. Please write the City Planning Commission and urge them to include a wetland in the Mission Bay Project and emphasize that it should be included whether or not it is on Port property. If you have written before, please write again. Final decisions will be reached soon, our wetland needs all the help it can get.

Write to:

Toby Rosenblatt, President  
City Planning Commission  
450 McAllister St., 6th floor  
San Francisco, CA 94102

If you would send a copy of your letter to GGAS it would be appreciated.

### GGAS SEPTEMBER MEETING

Thursday, Sept. 10 at 7:30 p.m.  
See page 117.

## THE BACK YARD BIRDER

There I was, part of the happening that was the Golden Gate Bridge "walk." For an hour and a half we were at a standstill among strangers, each one of us dealing with the frustration in his own way. Some practiced Yoga, others sang and played kazoos, cracked jokes or became fast friends. I drove away panic by looking skyward at groups of curious gulls and terns and promised myself I'd read more about these saviors of my sanity.

"Sea Gull" is a term which makes birders cringe, but one which will continue to be used by the public and which is a descriptive general term. Perhaps one day I'll spend enough time with someone who has easily-remembered tips on gull identification so that I won't have to lump them into "gull species." Gulls are difficult to nail down because of their many plumages during various life stages.

Terns, on the other hand, are more recognizable. Terns and gulls belong to the same family, *Laridae*, and can be told apart easily. Gulls fly with their heads erect, pointing forward while terns fly with their heads and bills pointing downward. Gulls tend to soar on their narrow wings; terns are more swallow-like in appearance and flight. They will also hover before diving into the water for food, their pointed wings held against their bodies. Gulls' bills are hooked at the tip and terns' bills are sharply pointed. Although terns have webbed feet and are buoyant, their feet and legs are too weak to propel them very well. Gulls, however, spend much time swimming and bobbing about on the water.

We have several species of terns which breed in Northern California. These birds winter from Central California south to Mexico, Central and South America.

The Caspian Tern is easily recognized because of its very heavy bright red-

orange bill ("blood red" according to some field guides). It is a large tern (20" long), has a slightly-forked tail and shows a dark gray wedge of color near its wings' tips. Its legs are black and it sports a black cap during breeding season. It is very vocal and has a distinctive, raucous voice. It is the least sociable of the terns but nests in small colonies along coasts and inland lakes, rivers and marshes.

The Forster's Tern is smaller (14" long) and also has a black cap. But its legs, feet and bill are a lighter orange and it has a long, deeply-forked tail. It nests in fresh or salt water marshes (it is seldom seen on coastal beaches). It nests on floating vegetation, occasionally appropriating a used muskrat or grebe nest. Swooping gracefully over marshes, it hunts insects, frogs and fish. I've seen them riding air currents beside the San Mateo Bridge.

The Least Tern is North America's smallest tern, about 9" long. It has a black cap with a white forehead and yellow-orange bill, feet and legs. Its tail is deeply-forked and in flight the black wedge on its outer primaries is obvious. Least Terns nest on beaches and sandbars in colonies and their numbers have declined because of loss of habitat. I believe I read that there are some Least Terns in the Emeryville Crescent. Their flight is rapid and buoyant, a joy to watch.

Terns are much pickier about their diet than gulls, whose success is no doubt due to their indiscriminate taste and their opportunism. Unlike many birds, gulls seem to thrive alongside man. Terns often prefer particular types of fish and never take plant food or refuse. They can, however, be just as ruthless as gulls—Caspian Terns, e.g., often raid other birds' nests. Somehow they just don't seem as predatory, perhaps because of their overall grace in the air.

There have been many times I'd have like to fly, but never so much as that

morning when I was part of "footlock." I longed for the freedom of the gulls and terns overhead.

—MEG PAULETICH

## IF YOU CAN'T STAND THE HEAT

I'd like to share with *Gull* readers a few of the personal experiences and impressions of a volunteer for Point Reyes Bird Observatory. During the two weeks from May 30 to June 13 of this year he helped collect biological data on the Southeast Farallon Island. They were told to me generally unscientific terms by someone who is eminently qualified scientifically, Dr. Stephen F. Bailey, a GGAS member, and an ornithologist at the California Academy of Sciences, and long time Observations Editor for *The Gull*.

Steve was bemused, for example, both physically and philosophically, by the severity of the Western Gulls' nest defense as well as the uncanny knack of perhaps five percent of them to direct their defecations right on target. Any human passing the colony, or, woe be it, the individual unfortunate enough to have the assignment of observing nests or banding chicks, was dive-bombed, and thoroughly soiled.

In what seems to me a lapse in logistics, there was only one hard hat hanging by the front door and the staffers going out to collect data at the gull colony were soon competing amongst themselves for it. "Everyone brings a rain suit to the island, not only because of unpredictable weather, but as a defense against the aforementioned fecal fallout," noted Steve.

An additional hazard in the vicinity of the gull colony were the hordes of fleas that crept across one's boots and snuggled into socks, raising more than a few welts on already-beleaguered observers.

A long sturdy stick was an item most of us wouldn't think to pack when going on vacation, but by holding one over his head as he walked, Steve was able to fend off the *kamikazes*, although "they hit the stick with such force they sometimes knocked me off balance," he said with a reminiscent catch in his voice.

Once past the gull colony, Steve made his way to one of his assignments in a cove where northern elephant seals basked. The seals themselves posed no special threat as he looked through his binos at their identifying tags to record the individual numbers, but he was grateful for a steady wind that blew during most of his two-week stay because it kept away the infamous Farallon Flies; nasty, winged, tickling little pests that are sometimes known to cover islanders head to toe.

Steve's narrative brightened considerably when he talked about the migrant landbirds that were trapped in mist nets. After their extraction from the nets, the birds are measured, recorded as to species and sex, and banded on the leg. "We banded about 95 percent of the non-aerial birds," among which were 19 species of eastern vagrants. A Worm-eating Warbler and a Mourning Warbler were of special interest, but having never seen the latter, nor a Brown Thrasher, a Red-eyed Vireo, or a Dickcissel, the list made me envious.

Five different Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were netted, banded and released. Whether they were unwilling to continue a journey that required flying over the bounding sea, or if they simply like a good tussle. I will never know. But they returned time and again to become entangled in the nets, and each time someone had to remove them, *very* carefully.

Evidently they think that human fingers were put here to be mutilated and Steve

said he received some memorable bites.

"Once they get you, they hang on and won't let go!"

"Ah," I said compassionately, "the pit bulls of the avian world."

The Common Murre colony presented a daily theater of the absurd. By our standards, these birds act comically klutzy and seem without a single template for nesting organization. The 130 nesting sites Steve monitored were crammed together so closely that neighbors didn't have to leave their eggs to fight with one another, and they squabbled frequently.

Sometimes when a murre returns to the colony, it doesn't go neatly and efficiently to its nest; it does a bellyflop down on top of sitting birds and then scrambles, screaming, across the entire populace until it finds home base. There ensues an elaborate greeting of mates with more vocalizing, head shaking and posturing. Bills careen rapidly through the air. Then the two murres preen each other into a feather-fluffed, eyes-closed ecstasy.

When the eggs, which come in a variety of colors, are laid, their pristine condition is very temporary because of murres' complete lack of toilet training. They excrete everywhere; in each others nests, on their neighbors and their mates, and on the eggs, which soon take on the appearance of lumpy rocks. Not content to simply defacate all over, they will pluck gobs of poop out of their nests and fling them willy-nilly around the colony.

Murres have so little cranial aptitude that they will return to the nest with a small fish...and present it solemnly to their egg!

It's encouraging to report that, despite their seeming ineptitude, the murres were raising a healthy crop of young; El Nino, gillnet drownings and oil spills had

decimated the population in past years.

Among other seabird species that nest on the Farallones, the Western Gulls, Brant's Cormorants, and Cassin's Auklets were producing well. The later-nesting species, which include Pelagic Cormorants, Pigeon Guillemots, and Tufted Puffins, seemed likely to have a good year, but it was too soon to know during Steve's tenure on the island.

Steve is looking forward to a return trip to the Farallones some September when he will have an opportunity to witness firsthand the scores of vagrant landbirds that seek a brief refuge on those specks of rock 27 miles off the Golden Gate.

—NANCY T. CONZETT

## **TRACKS IN THE SKY MONO LAKE BENEFIT**

All eight Bay Area Audubon Chapters together with the Western Regional Office of the National Audubon Society invite you to a special lecture/slide show, book signing and wine and cheese reception celebrating the release of a new book and the opening of a related traveling exhibit at the California Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco.

The opening is to be Tuesday, October 13 from 6-8 p.m. at the Academy. *TRACKS IN THE SKY* is by photographer Tupper Ansel Blake and author Peter Steinhart. Subtitled *Wildlife and Wetlands of the Pacific Flyway*, the book presents the past and current status of a phenomenon of great importance. Published jointly by Chronicle Books, the Smithsonian Institution and National Audubon Society, copies of the book are available now at a pre-publication price of \$32.00 and may be held for you at the opening or mailed to you.

The traveling exhibit is sponsored by the Smithsonian and features Tupper's spectacular photographs, along with sounds and artifacts of the Flyway from Alaska to Mexico. The opening will give us exclusive use of the gallery for uncrowded viewing, and both Tupper and Peter will be on hand to autograph books and talk about their experiences over wine and *hors d'oeuvres*.

As a finale, Tupper and Peter will show slides in the auditorium taken in preparation of the book. They will discuss issues of wildlife and wetlands associated with the Flyway. All pro-

YES, we (I) will attend the opening.

Number in party \_\_\_\_\_

@\$25=\$\_\_\_\_\_ enclosed.

NO, we (I) cannot attend but a donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ for NAS-MONO LAKE FUND is enclosed.

I would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ copies of *TRACKS IN THE SKY* @ pre-publication price of \$32.00 each = \$\_\_\_\_\_ enclosed.

I will pick up my book(s) at the opening.

Please mail my book(s).  
(add \$1.20 per book postage).

Total enclosed for benefit and/or books \$\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (d) \_\_\_\_\_ (e) \_\_\_\_\_

Audubon Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

### PLEASE REPLY BY OCT. 5, 1987

Make checks payable to SCVAS-Tracks. Send to SCVAS, 415 Cambridge Ave., #21, Palo Alto, CA 94306.

ceeds beyond costs will go to the NAS-Mono Lake Fund. Tickets are \$25.00 per person and may be purchased by phoning the GGAS office or mailing the coupon.

### JOE MORLAN CLASS CHANGE

The location and room numbers announced in *THE GULL* for July-August for the fall birding classes in San Francisco have been changed. All classes will be in room 227, Marina Middle School at the corner of Bay and Filmore Sts. Ample free parking is available in the school lot off Bay St. on the east side of the building. There will be no fee for parking at this location.

The new location became available only recently and will be much more comfortable and more convenient for most students. Pre-registration is recommended. Call the Community Services Office for details, 776-8247.

### LAST CHANCE FOR GGAS TROPICAL TOURS

We still have a few places left in our Southern Mexico and Costa Rica Tours. Please call Lina Jane Prairie (549-3187 eves.), or the office if you are seriously interested. Final date to sign up is September 10.

### BIRDATHON THANKS

Our local birders earned almost \$1100 for the Mono Lake Legal Fund of National Audubon. This Birdathon attracted a small, though dedicated, band of folks who found an amazing number of species for that particular day in April. The East Bay team, lead by Helen and Paul Green, found 137 species combing their territory. A field trip in Alameda, lead by Leora Feeney,

collected some 39+ species and a personal blitz by Tina Breschini found 71 species. Mary Louise Rosegay, in San Francisco, was responsible for 100 species. Many thanks to our leaders and their teams for their efforts on behalf of Mono Lake!

## THANKS, CONTINUED

Along with your contributions to the Mono Lake Fund, you have also sent \$1,035.00 to Audubon Canyon Ranch and \$345.00 to the Richardson Bay Audubon Center as a result of the benefit Wine and Cheese Tasting.

Also this year we contributed \$300.00 to the Marin Breeding Bird Atlas bringing our total to \$800.00 over the life of the project.

The Bay Area Audubon Council has provided funding for the Bay Delta Estuary Hearings testimony with each chapter contributing what it can afford—we have allocated \$200.00 so far.

## FREMONT FIELD TRIPS CLASS

Alice Hoch again offers through the Fremont Adult School (791-5841) a series of six morning classes. They will visit a different birding spot each week, meeting on Tuesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. starting Sept. 15 and ending Oct. 20.

Registration is at the first session of the class in room 1, Fremont Adult School, 4700 Calaveras Ave., Fremont. Students should bring binoculars and be prepared to bird that morning. Class size will be limited. The instructor's phone is 657-0475.

## A NEW HOME FOR GGAS?

As you will have read elsewhere in this issue, GGAS is facing a serious monetary shortfall due to a change in National Audubon's dues splitting policy (the way they fund chapters). We may face the prospect of closing our office in future years if worst case analyses prove true. YOU CAN HELP. If we could have a rent free office our situation would be much improved. So we are asking our membership—DO YOU HAVE AN OFFICE, OR HOUSE, OR KNOW OF ONE (PERHAPS YOUR COMPANY), THAT YOU WOULD CARE TO DONATE TO GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON. THIS WILL, OF COURSE, HAVE LARGE TAX DEDUCTION POSSIBILITIES FOR THE DONOR.

Please take this plea seriously. Our situation is indeed dire, and you CAN help. Thank you.

## GGAS VOLUNTEER COORDINATION?

Chapter activities depend upon volunteers. Finding and recruiting people from among our members to meet these needs is a job a retired person could do and find satisfaction. The tasks include telephoning, inducting and instructing volunteers, and coordination with the office manager.

From past experience there are many people willing to help. Lack of a structure for specifying tasks, scheduling and coordinating the work has prevented an effective program. If you might help, please call Barbara Rivenes at the office and talk about it (843-2222).

## NEWS FROM THE RANCH

Audubon Canyon Ranch

Shoreline Highway, Stinson Beach (415) 383-1644  
 Wildlife Sanctuaries & Centers for Nature  
 Education under joint Sponsorship of Golden Gate,  
 Madrone, Marin and Sequoia Audubon Societies  
 Rick Baird, Chairman

The gates at Bolinas Preserve closed in mid-July on another season of nesting at the heronry and another season of spectacular viewing for visitors. The Bouverie Preserve also closed for a much needed summer rest. Perhaps now is the time to acknowledge some recent bequests and pass out a few bouquets.

From the estates of Edward Schmiedell and Melba Schmiedell major bequests were made to ACR which have been added to the endowment fund, according to the policy that all bequests and memorials go into endowment.

These gifts keep on giving because only the interest they earn is spent to support ACR's programs and maintain its facilities. Endowment income insures a future for ACR.

Bequests from the estate of Mary Keohane, and Anna Margaret Smith have also been received as well as a contribution from the Winifred and Harry B. Allen Foundation. Gifts for the Bouverie Preserve have been received from the L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, the Stanley Smith Charitable Trust, the Howard Gilman Foundation of New York and the Otto Tellers of Sonoma.

However, it takes more than money to operate ACR's three preserves. This past spring 94 classes came to the Bolinas Preserve and 81 to the Bouverie Preserve for educational field trips according to ranch manager, Skip Schwartz. These programs are run by volunteers. At Bouverie the 1986-87 tally was 2,110 children and 1,062 adults instructed or

lead by 68 docents who contributed 2,415 hours of volunteer time.

These hours are included in the 14,500 docent hours donated to the ranch annually at all preserves. In addition, the newly formed Ranch Guides gave 1,000 hours, weekend chapter hosts gave another 1,500 hours and ACR board members contributed 2,000 hours. "The total of 19,000 hours is equivalent to approximately 10 full-time positions," Schwartz said.

Although volunteers receive no pay they are rewarded by many thank yous and notes of appreciation. Some recent ones to Bouverie docents from classroom teachers:

"Your group of docents were knowledgeable, enthusiastic and very personable. The program is extremely well-organized, a worthwhile experience."

"Of all our trips this was the best! I have never seen the children so interested and excited on a trip."

"The pre-visit information was invaluable. The trip itself was excellent. Docents are well-prepared and wonderful with kids."

Thanks to everyone of you who have given in any way to making ACR the special place it is.

## BIRDATHON: MONO-PRBO

The tenth annual Point Reyes Bird Observatory-Mono Lake Birdathon is Sept. 26, 1987. Cal PRBO (868-1221) for more information and sponsor your local GGAS counter.

## **CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

The GGAS Conservation Committee meets monthly in two sections, Berkeley (first Monday) and San Francisco (second Monday). Visitors are welcome. We hope that you will come to a meeting in September and, perhaps, find that you want to join the committee. Call the GGAS office for particulars, as meetings are sometimes held in homes of members. Meetings are lively, and there is a lot that needs doing.

## **GGAS SEPTEMBER MEETING**

Long-time GGAS member, Roger Alexander, a geologist, will present his slide-show, "CHALLENGING FRONTIER, Fjords of Chile and Northern Antarctica" a program with emphasis on geology and bird life. The photography of this unfamiliar area is outstandingly lovely.

It will be at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 10th at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley.

## **GIFTS and BEQUESTS —**

### **FOR GGAS**

*In Memory of*

Mrs. Marie Bray

### **FOR THE RARE BIRD ALERT**

Helen Chism

John Comstock

Ann Dewart

Jimm Edgar

Dan Goetz

Edward Greves

Carlos Jordan

### **Gift of**

Mr. & Mrs. Joe Lucido

Mimi & Ellis Myers

Marilyn Schmitz

Jean Marie Spoelman

Ron Thorn

Anna Wilcox

Christine Wolfe

Claire Wolfe

**The Mount Diablo Audubon Society**

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 1550 Shattuck Ave., #204, Berkeley, CA 94709. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull* as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

## OCTOBER 17 NEW, IMPROVED BIRD SEED SALE

It's time to restock your bird seed supply for fall and winter! Along with our usual array of fine bird seed mixes, we will offer a selection of bird feeders and bird houses. Remember these make interesting Christmas gifts and help to support our chapter activities.

We are still awaiting donations of used binoculars, field guides and other birding equipment in good working order to be sold at the sale. Bring these items to the GGAS office before October 9.

For our expanded Berkeley sale we have obtained a better space in a convenient location (we'll tell you where next issue) and lengthened the hours to 9 to 5. The San Francisco pick-up will be the same.

And Faye Beeman of Madrone

Audubon (Santa Rosa) has offered his bird houses for our benefit. They will be displayed at the sale.

Also a friend of GGAS has offered a selection of deluxe terracotta bird baths for our benefit. If you are interested in purchasing one, please call the office so that you can see the catalog.

### ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS

Please order and prepay by October 9. Orders will be available for pick-up in Berkeley and San Francisco. Confirmation of your order and the pick-up point will be sent to you by the week before the sale.

Send the order form (with tax calculated, please), your check and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Golden Gate Audubon Society, BIRD SEED, 1550 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, CA 94709.

**GGAS' OWN PREMIUM MIX:** Top quality specially blended for us to meet the needs of Bay Area birds. It contains only red and white millet and black oil sunflower seed. This mix sold in the area and an excellent value for the money. No waste seed.

**VOLKMAN WILD BIRD SEED:** The "Rolls-Royce" of bird seed, contains no low-cost fillers the birds will flick aside. Composed of white and red millet and sudan grass screenings (a favorite of Bay Area birds).

**BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED:** It is high in oil content and nutritive value and appeals to chickadees and nuthatches, titmice, jays, finches and many other bird species. This is the best all-around seed for attracting the largest number of desirable birds.

**NIGER (THISTLE SEED):** Imported from India, this seed is 98% pure. It is a minute seed rich in oil, it is unappealing to larger birds and squirrels. It will not sprout in your yard.

**GGAS BIRD SEED AND FEEDER SALE**

**ORDER AND PREPAY BY OCT. 9 / PICK UP ON SATURDAY, OCT. 17  
BIRD FEEDERS**

**DROLL YANKEE FEEDER**—Top of the line—16" long plexiglass tube with perches and tray \$25.00

**PERKY-PET HUMMINGBIRD FEEDER**—glass feeding bottle (holds 30 oz.) with six flower feeding stations and removeable perches \$14.00

**HANDMADE UNIQUE SUET FEEDER**—made for us by Faye Beeman \$8.00

**HANDCRAFTED PLEXIGLASS AND CEDAR PLATFORM FEEDER**—made for us by Faye Beeman \$10.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (evening) \_\_\_\_\_

Berkeley       San Francisco

SEED	QUANTITY	AMOUNT
GGAS' OWN PREMIUM MIX	20 lbs.	\$ 7.00
	50 lbs.	\$14.00
VOLKMAN WILD BIRD SEED	20lbs.	\$ 9.00
	50 lbs.	\$19.00
BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED	10 lbs.	\$ 9.00
	25 lbs.	\$21.00
NIGER (THISTLE SEED)	5lbs.	\$ 9.00

**FEEDERS**

DROLL YANKEE 16"	\$25.00		
PERKY-PET Humminbird feeder	\$14.00		
SUET FEEDER	\$ 8.00		
PLATFORM FEEDER	\$10.00		

Be sure to include  
your check with a  
stamped and self-  
addressed envelope.

<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	
<b>ADD TAX (7%)</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	
<b>CONTRIBUTION TO GGAS</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

( ) Yes, I am interested in birdbaths.

# —SECOND CLASS MATTER



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THE GULL

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Arthur Feinstein, ex officio  
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Bruce Howard  
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## NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RARE BIRD ALERT (recorded) (415) 528-0288

Mail for all individuals listed above should be sent to GGAS office.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$8 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$18 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917,  
and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month, and July 15th for September issue.